Rosmini College

Health and Life Skills Programme

*Ôver the Back Fence Project*

October 16. 2014

Reference: Ms. Kristina Crouch

I have known Ms Kristina Crouch since 2012. Kristina and I have collaborated to extend our Over the Back Fence Project to the Cook Islands and engage our students in weekly video lessons since early 2013. I consider Kristina to be a trusted colleague.

Kristina is an intelligent, disciplined and caring teacher. When I asked my students who are working in this project to describe Kristina, they said she is “always well-prepared, clear on description, is hands-on and easy to communicate with”.

We have been privileged to work with a person that guides, mentors, shares and can see what is possible rather than see barriers. Kristina enables my students and I to work together with her students and grow together. It has been a brilliant experience to have been involved in the project and see it continuing because such strong foundations have been established.

Our initial contact was to seek joining her primary age students at Rukati (Rarotonga) Primary School with my Year 12 students at Rosmini College. This was to be our programme’s first attempt to communicate on a weekly basis with a school overseas from New Zealand. Kristina was able to foresee the initial and on-going difficulties of language, time zones and video capacity. She always was positive in seeking solutions and more importantly not giving up where others have.

That relationship was documented when Kristina joined me to co-present at the 2013 U-Learn Conference in Hamilton. We have since co-presented that remarkable follow up story at U-Learn 2014 in Rotorua in just last week. In conversation and at conferences we continued to seek other opportunities to build our programme between our classes. Rosmini College are proud to a small part of Te Kura Uira - Digital School of The Cook Islands.

In Kristina I have witnessed a person dedicated to seeking solutions that benefit young people and a sincere willingness to extend educational opportunities to students living on the distant and isolated communities of the Cook Islands. Kristina was able to develop her resources to build a physical and human infrastructure of support. She has learned how to use technology and software, evaluate the function and seek ways to apply those resources within classroom and network settings.

When our students connect with the students in the Cook Islands, I also witness a love and trust her students have of her. Kristina is clear in her expectations of the student. She does not accept excuse and gently but firmly reminds the students of the expectations and their responsibilities. She sets high but reasonable standards for the students and myself.

It has been a privilege for me to work with Kristina. I see strong leadership, aspiration and a good dose of common sense. The school that secures her services is a beneficiary of a young professional capable of developing systems, programmes and students.

I look forward to our continuing professional relationship, personal friendship, mentor and collaborations.

Most sincerely,

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